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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7737th meeting
Wednesday, 13 July 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Bessho	(Japan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Gasso Matoses
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (S/2016/552)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (S/2016/552)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of South Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/552, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Lasdous: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council once again on the crisis in South Sudan.

The current situation in the country remains fluid and uncertain. Since I last briefed the Security Council on Sunday, 10 July, a unilateral ceasefire declared by President Salva Kiir on the evening of 11 July, and endorsed by First Vice-President Machar, appears to be holding in Juba, although there is some sporadic shooting in different parts of the city. It appears now that the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) is in full control of Juba, with a lot of celebratory gunfire and looting reportedly having taken place overnight between 11 and 12 July.

Taking advantage of the relative calm yesterday and today, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is conducting limited patrolling to evaluate the situation and the safety and security of our personnel and assets at various United Nations compounds in the city. It has been possible to establish that both cantonment sites of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A in Opposition), which are on the west side of Jebel mountain, have been abandoned. Reportedly, Opposition forces are currently scattered around the areas of Jebel and Yei road, while SPLA troops are setting up defensive positions along the Yei and Gudele road, in the western part of Juba. Further clashes, therefore, cannot be ruled out.

Non-commercial air traffic has resumed at Juba airport, which is under the control of the SPLA. The United Nations Mine Action Service yesterday made an assessment of the ramp, taxiway and runway of the airport and did not find any shells or unexploded ordnance. But there is the worrying fact that one of our helicopters and two of our fixed-wing aircraft sustained bullet-fire during the fighting. UNMISS and UNICEF have undertaken to replenish the water supplies for the troops and the protection of civilians sites by sending water truck to the Nile River, but I have to say that securing freedom of movement remains very challenging because security forces are obstructing the movement of our people every step of the way, citing insecurity.

While we welcome the cessation of hostilities, it is very clear that the Government must allow UNMISS and humanitarian actors genuine freedom of movement and unfettered access so that we can provide vital assistance to the affected civilian population. We have been in this crisis for six days now and we are still not able to ascertain a comprehensive assessment of the security, humanitarian and human rights consequences of what happened. As of today, humanitarian partners estimate that at least 36,000 civilians have been displaced by the recent fighting in Juba. Seven thousands of those are at the two UNMISS compounds, and the remaining are sheltering either in the World Food Programme compound, non-governmental organization compounds or several churches in the city.

As for human rights violations, the reports are but it does seem that numerous civilians have been killed. The initial Government figures indicate at least 272 people, including 33 civilians, have been killed, but I believe that this is only the tip of the iceberg, given alarming reports over the past few days indicating that civilians have been barred from reaching safer grounds, including United Nations compounds. The sanctity of our premises has been gravely violated, whether indirectly or directly. This gives me the opportunity to state once again that is unacceptable for the belligerent parties to seek to instrumentalize the sites devoted to the protection of civilians.

In and around our sites alone, we have identified eight people killed and several injured. I have to add, very sadly, that two peacekeepers and one United Nations national staff member have lost their lives. Seven other peacekeepers and one international United Nations staff member have sustained injuries. It has to be made clear yet again that any deliberate attack against United Nations forces, personnel and premises could constitute a war crime, and investigations into the circumstances of what happened are under way. In this regard, I note that yesterday President Salva Kiir sent a letter to Special Representative Ellen Løj and promised that his Administration would investigate the incident that resulted in the death of UNMISS peacekeepers. I urge South Sudanese authorities to do so without delay.

Outside of Juba, on Monday, 11 July, fighting took place in Laiyna, Kajo Keji, Yei and Mundri in Central Equatoria and in Torit in Eastern Equatoria. In Wau, the situation was already very unstable and has remained so, and on Sunday armed uniformed soldiers reportedly attacked and looted a neighbourhood near the Nazareth market south of Wau town. As a result, some 3,000 civilians sought refuge at a Catholic church and 6,000 sought shelter in the UNMISS protection site. Yesterday, we received unconfirmed reports that SPLA forces had attacked an armed group affiliated with the SPLM/A in Opposition in the Ngongba area.

In the Upper Nile region the situation remains calm. That includes Bor, Bentiu and Malakal, but UNMISS has observed the mobilization of SPLA and SPLM/A in Opposition forces around parts of Malakal and Leer. We remain very worried about the potential for a resumption of violence and spill-over into others parts of the country, as we have seen in the past.

As Council members are already aware, several efforts were made by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Løj and various regional and international leaders — including Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the African Union High Representative for South Sudan, former President Konaré, and the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, former President Mogae — to engage President Salva Kiir, First Vice-President Machar and their respective senior military and political advisers so as to press them to cease hostilities immediately, restrain their respective forces, and ensure the integrity of the protection of civilians sites and the safety and security of United Nations and other personnel.

In addition to the immediate response of the Security Council to consider the situation in South Sudan on 10 July, on 11 July the Council of Ministers of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) met in an emergency session in Nairobi and issued a communiqué condemning the violence, stressing accountability for the breakdown of the rule of law, and demanding a revision of the UNMISS mandate to establish an intervention brigade and increase the number of troops from the region to secure Juba, among other decisions. Following suit yesterday, the African Union Peace and Security Council also met in Kigali and endorsed the IGAD communiqué in full.

Following that, the IGAD Chiefs of Staff met in Addis Ababa on 12 July and called for the reinforcement of UNMISS by regional troops. Of course, we are fully ready to work with IGAD to refine the modalities of that concept, the goal — as I understand it — being to secure Juba and, if possible, its airport through demilitarization so that the transitional Government of National Unity can get to work without worrying about security issues. We are going to work with them, and I think that the Chiefs of Staff are travelling tomorrow, before the African Union Summit in Kigali, to refine the concept.

We can now clearly see the results of the deliberate attempts of the parties to stall the implementation of the peace agreement, which we must not forget was signed almost one year ago, in August 2015. We can afford less than ever to sit idle as the people of South Sudan yet again bear the brunt of the intransigence of their leaders. Yesterday, media outlets reported that President Salva Kiir had dismissed Deputy Foreign Minister Cirino Hiteng, allegedly because he was present at the IGAD ministerial meeting in Nairobi. Council members will recall that the Deputy Foreign Minister was an appointee of the former detainees party to the peace agreement. The unilateral dismissal is in itself a breach of the peace agreement. If this is a forewarning of what is yet to come, clearly only a strong political and coordinated approach can still salvage the peace process.

I told the Council three days ago, concerted action by the Security Council is required. As the Secretary-General himself has stated, the Security Council must urgently consider the question of an arms embargo.

Clearly, the threat of that has done little to deter the parties, but I think it has to be as clear as possible. Likewise, additional targeted sanctions on leaders and commanders who block the implementation of the peace agreement must be enacted immediately. The never-ending cycle of devastating violence in South Sudan must come to an end now.

In concluding my remarks, let me recall that today's consultations were meant to be held in the context of the progress report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (S/2016/552) issued in mid-June and the UNMISS mandate renewal. While we were cautiously optimistic about the formation of the transitional Government of National Unity back in April, it is unclear now what further progress can be made under current conditions. In this regard, the Secretary-General's recommendation for a technical roll-over of the UNMISS mandate remains valid and necessary while we do an assessment of the requirements to address the situation on the ground. I would suggest that the technical rollover could be for one month, so that we would have time to carry out the assessment, consult with the region and the African Union and make recommendations to the Council. In addition, should the Mission need to be reinforced — and it probably will — including through additional troops and more robust capabilities, such as attack helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles, to fulfil our mandate to protect civilians, it would be imperative that such reinforcements be devoted to implement the same mandate as all other troops and to answer to the same chain of command.

The President: I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Malwal (South Sudan): Allow me to begin by congratulating you and your delegation, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of July. My delegation will render its full support.

As this is my first engagement with the Security Council as Permanent Representative of my country, I would like to assure the Council of my cooperation and support in tackling issues that pertain to my country.

At the outset, I would like to express my deep condolences with regard to the United Nations peacekeepers and personnel who lost their lives during the unfortunate event in Juba. I would like to inform the Security Council of the commitment of the Transiti Government of National Unity to fully implement Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in S Sudan. The Transitional Government of National U remains on course to implement the Agreement des the numerous challenges we face. It is unfortu to note that the few achievements of the Transiti Government of National Unity have been sever impacted by the events of the past few days in S Sudan. Nevertheless, the Transitional Governm remains committed to the implementation of Agreement and considers the setbacks as a lear curve.

As members are well aware, over the past few w some major towns in South Sudan were attacke unknown gunmen, which resulted in displacement loss of property and lives among many of our citiz In Raja, the capital of Lol state, on 15 June the hou the Governor was attacked and the town was ove by unknown gunmen, before they were repelle the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). W the capital of Wau state, was attacked on 24 June, by unknown gunmen. The Council released a p statement that called for calm and restraint.

The Transitional Government of National U acted swiftly on both occasion to protect civil and their property. Human casualties were minim and further loss of property was avoided thr the imposition of a curfew in the attacked to Humanitarian access was allowed unhindered by states' Governments, and the new Governors of two states called for calm and asked the people to w together in getting to the root cause of what happe Furthermore, the Transitional Government of Nati Unity set up an investigative committee under chairmanship of Mr. Riek Gal Kok, the Nati Minister of Health. He visited Wau, and his find will be made public once completed.

From 7 to 10 July, Juba, the capital city of Republic of South Sudan and the seat of the Transiti Government of National Unity, experienced the difficult challenge to the Peace Agreement so far 7 July, at approximately 8.30 p.m., a force from headquarters of the First Vice-President, commande Lieutenant Colonel David Rieu, attacked a check at Gudelle, a neighbourhood in Juba. The check was run by an integrated force from the SPLA and organized forces. The attack resulted in the deat

two SPLA soldiers, two national Security personnel and one medical doctor, who was caught in the crossfire.

On 8 July, President Salva Kiir Mayardit called First Vice-President Riek Machar and Vice-President James Wani Igga for a meeting to discuss the security situation and the shooting of the night before and to set up a committee to investigate that unfortunate incident. As the President was about to complete their meeting, the First Vice-President's huge protection force — in 21 mounted vehicles accompanied by an ambulance, in which ammunition was concealed — arrived at the main gate of the Presidential Palace as a response to false breaking news posted by the Press Secretary of Mr. Machar, Mr. James Gatdet Dak. The false report stated:

> "Fighting erupted inside J1, President Salva Kiir's palace in the national capital, Juba. The President and his commanders attempted to arrest the First Vice-President, Dr. Riek Machar Teny. This came after the President called for a meeting of the presidency in his Office with Dr. Machar and Vice-President James Wani Igga. This turned out to be a set-up to arrest and possibly harm Dr. Machar. Fortunately, Dr. Machar's bodyguards have managed to fight vigorously and rescued Dr. Machar. He is now safe. Meanwhile, fighting has continued."

In the midst of all that chaos, the President protected and facilitated the safe passage of the First Vice-President back to his residence. He, at the same time, constituted an investigation committee headed by the Minister of the Interior, Lieutenant General Alfred Lado Gore, which is expected to report within the next 10 days.

On 10 July, at around 8 a.m., a force from the headquarters of the First Vice-President attacked and overran a checkpoint on the Juba to Yei road. SPLA forces responded immediately and protracted fighting continued throughout the day around the checkpoint area. SPLA forces eventually regained control of the checkpoint. On 11 July, in the morning, forces of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition forces attacked the checkpoint again; that time they were repulsed and pursued into their camp, which they abandoned.

Based on that narrative of events, the President reiterated his commitment to the continued implementation of the Agreement in letter and spirit, and therefore issued a Republican Order for the cessation of hostilities with immediate effect from the date of signature, as from 6 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time on 11 July.

In conclusion, the Transitional Government of National Unity is the only viable mechanism to fully implement the Agreement. We call on the Security Council to collaboratively work with the Transitional Government of National Unity on how best we can together deliver peace and security to my people. We call on the Council to engage all parties to the Agreement to redouble their efforts to implement the Agreement to allow the people of South Sudan to start building a better future for the next generation.

The President: I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.